Subject No. 9.

Revision of Forms of Village accounts.

Summary of discussion.—The existing forms of village accounts should be printed and Shanbhogs' stationery allowance should be increased.

Dewan's reply.—This is not a subject of general interest to be discussed here. Shanbhogs may represent by petition.

Subject No. 10.

Disposal of darkhasts for land for cultivation.

Summary of discussion.—The present rule enjoining sale of lands required for cultivation must be modified. An exceptionally favorable season often enables a raiyat to cultivate more land than he ordinarily holds. But the present procedure entails so much delay in his getting it that the season is often lost before he gets it. The loss is both to raiyat and Government. Therefore:—

Land should not be sold by auction—

(1) merely because it was resigned within the past three years, (no good land and none which contains trees or buildings of any marketable value are resigned to Government)

(2) nor because it contains some trees though of no value or comparatively of trifling value,

(3) nor even when there are trees or buildings. In such cases it is better to fix a price and give the land promptly than lose a whole season and incur the loss to the food-stock of the country which that implies.

Let the rule be that only land on which any Government Revenue has been remitted shall be sold by auction and no other.

Mr. Chendrashekaraiya (Landholder and R. M. from Nagamangala Taluk) pointed out that the delay was particularly great where a large survey number had to be subdivided. The process often took two or three years, and then notwithstanding that the applicant had incurred the trouble and expense of erecting the boundary marks and assisting the Surveyors in sub-division, the land was sold merely because some one who never cared for the land before, coveted it after it had been divided and demarcated. At the sale, a stranger was the highest bidder. This was hard on the first applicant. The rule should be that the first applicant in such cases should have the land for an upset price. This would enable poor people to acquire land. Sales by auction shut them out and obliged them to be tenants where they could otherwise be proprietors. *Mr. Nagappa* (Patel and R. M. from Turuvekere Sub-Taluk) pointed out that the rule to grant lands to first applicants often afforded temptation to tamper with the dates recorded on applications for land. *Messrs. Bhima Rao and Venkataramaiya* (Shanbhogs and R. Ms. from Mulbagal and Malur Taluks respectively) pointed out that under existing rules the cheapest land, sold and bought with the utmost expedition, could not be had within twenty days of application,

and then under clause 27 of Rule XX of the Land Revenue Rules, the person who obtained it could not be sure of his name being registered for three months more. *Mr. Sadasiva Rao* (Pleader and Landholder and R. M. from Dodballapur Municipality) suggested that at least lands whose estimated value was below Rs. 10 or even Rs. 5 should be ordered to be given away without sale. *Mr. Srinivasa Rao* (Coffee Planter and R. M. from Chikmagalur Taluk) stated that all that had been urged as to delay in the disposal of darkhasts and hardship on first applicant entailed by sales, was pre-eminently true and acutely felt in the case of darkhasts for land for coffee cultivation.

Dewan's reply.—The present rules requiring lands to be sold under certain circumstances are framed to prevent fraud and are conducive to morality both on the part of the people and of Government servants. But for such a rule, there would be occasion for corruption and the rich man who now openly bids at public auction will have the temptation to bribe petty officials. The demand for land and therefore its value is growing to such an extent that the time is approaching when it may be necessary to order that in specified tracts all land shall be sold by auction without exception; but even as it is, except in the case of lands which come under list B as being particularly valuable, the rules enjoin the immediate grant of Government land to the first applicant. The real grievance lies in the delay that is said to occur in giving out the land for cultivation. It is necessary that darkhasts should be disposed of more expeditiously, and we will always insist upon such speedy disposal. A more careful preparation of the A and B lists (of lands which may be given without sale and lands liable to be sold) will be enjoined. In the case of applications for unassessd waste lands, we can arrange for disposal by approximate measurement and assessment subject to correct survey and assessment by the Survey Department in due course. We can also arrange for prompt sale by local officers. But sale cannot be dispensed with in cases where lands are valuable or where there is more than one applicant for the same, and can entail no real or reasonable hardship. In cases of particular or exceptional hardship which must be rare indeed, provision exists to enable the Deputy Commissioner to employ a wise discretion (*vide* Rule XX, clause 5, of the Rules under the Land Revenue Code).

Subject No. II. Disposal of coffee land adjoining paddy fields.

Summary of discussion.—The sale of small areas of coffee lands adjoining fields under occupation in the Malnad (*i. e.*, Talkhat lands) involves particular hardship to raiyats. A raiyat who owns a little paddy land in a valley is often surrounded by dry crop land or land fit for coffee. There may be springs in it which feed his paddy land. There may be foot-paths across it. It may be his thrashing ground or